

How Shall We Escape

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of heeding God's word and not neglecting salvation, which includes everything that God purposed for the redeemed.

Duration: 54:10

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 1:1-2, Hebrews 2:3, Hebrews 4:12, Hebrews 6:1-2, Hebrews 11:6, Revelation 19:10-16

Topics: "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being prepared to share the word of God with others. He encourages the audience to have scripture verses that they have meditated on and prayed over, so that they can effectively communicate the message of God. The speaker also highlights the power of the Bible, stating that even if someone doesn't believe in it, the Word of God can still impact them. The sermon concludes with the speaker introducing the first verse that the Lord spoke about salvation, which will be further explored in the following sessions.

Transcript

Now that we might relate what we have been considering in the past with that which shall engage us tonight and for the next several weeks, I'm suggesting that you allow me to read in Revelation chapter 19, verses 10 through 16, and proceed immediately from there to the first two chapters of the book of Hebrews. I want you to understand two things from this text. The first is that the word that is going forth shall be that which will judge the unsaved in the day which they stand before him.

God is not going to bring up at that time some entirely new standard, but it will be that truth which has been revealed. We saw in the sixth chapter the going forth of the white horse that spoke to us of the word of God that should proceed down across all the centuries until the Lord himself should come. But now it is in this portion, as we saw last Sunday night in detail, that we're concerned about the rider of the right white horse.

The world sees the book and accepts or rejects it, but they do not see the Lord of the book that is presented with it and, in a sense, rides upon the truth of his word. So let hear carefully now as I read. John the Revelator declares, I saw heaven open and behold a white horse.

He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. He had a name written that no man

knew but he himself.

He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the one who rode upon the white horse.

This is the one that is presented by the word. To Hebrews now, chapter one and two. Many of you that were with us in the months past will recall the time we spent on these first chapters.

I read the first two verses. If I were to read the entire first chapter, it would be proper, setting forth the glory of this one whom you've just seen described by John the Revelator. But now the two verses, God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.

Let me read just the next verse. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Now to chapter two and verse one.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. Why? Because God has now spoken unto us by his son. We ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to what has been said by the son.

Do you remember in John eight, the word of the Lord, a great number of Jews believed on him, and our Lord declared to them these words. Now are ye my disciples indeed, if ye continue in the word which I have spoken unto you. And thus it is that we see the writer of Hebrews bearing that same truth.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to what God has spoken by his son, to these things which we have heard, lest at any time angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? This is addressed to Christians, not to the unsaved, though the truth of it is certainly applicable to the unsaved. How will the man dead in his sins escape if he neglects the testimony of redemption in the Lord Jesus Christ? There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, and obviously it makes it thus exclusive.

The only way to life is in the Lord Jesus. That foolish one who therefore neglects to receive Christ dooms his own soul, and this is applicable. But the primary intention of this scripture is not to the unsaved, but to those that profess faith in Christ.

How shall we escape if we, who have heard the truth and have believed on Christ, have confessed him as our Lord? How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now we of the Christian and Missionary Alliance delight in the test in the fourfold statement of our faith. We feel that it gives perspective, dimensions, and depth to our testimony. We have it, and sometimes I'm sure it is too glibly held by our people, but nonetheless and nevertheless, it does mean much to us.

Christ, our Savior, and all that we would think of in terms of redemption is included here in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. You notice it doesn't state salvation from Christ or by Christ or through him, but Christ, our Savior. And again, we love the statement, Christ, our sanctifier.

He is our sanctification. He is made unto us sanctification, and thus we have this statement. Then we speak of Christ, our healer, our Lord, who is sufficient for every need of the entire man, and Christ, our coming King.

We see, however, that the word salvation is by us arbitrarily used. One might well debate whether or not this use of terms is exegetically justified. The word salvation is a big word.

In fact, if you study every occurrence of the word salvation, you will discover that it reaches to eternity past, clear down through time into the present, and out into eternity to come. Thus, to take the word salvation and Savior and apply it to a segment of our experience is a decision that we have made and justify having made because of common usage and because of that which we mean to convey by it. But nevertheless, the word salvation has tenses that reach from eternity past to eternity to come.

For instance, our salvation was all purposed in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, and thus we have to go into eternity to past where we see the Lord Jesus is the lamb slain before the world was founded. And then we come back to the cross, and there we see our wonderful Lord in our place dying for us. And since he is dying for us, he is dying as us.

And we would say, therefore, that our salvation was all fully, completely, and perfectly provided at the cross. There is, however, another occasion, and that is the time when you discovered your sin, saw your need, bowed in repentance and in faith at the foot of the cross, and embraced the Son of God and received with him pardon and forgiveness and eternal life. And if you would speak as do I, you would say that then you were saved, referring to the fact that you received life as a gift from him.

But then we see the Apostle Paul saying, if he has saved us by his death, how much more shall we be saved by his life? And there is that sense in which we are daily receiving salvation from the power of sin as we partake of the grace that he provided for us at the cross. And then we find the Apostle Paul making such an expression as this, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. And so in the scripture, if you would study it carefully, you would find that salvation is from eternity past to eternity to come.

And it is in this extended sense that the writer of the book of Hebrews speaks, not in the particular sense of forgiveness or pardon, but in that extended sense of embracing everything that the Lord Jesus intended to be the portion of the redeemed. And then we would understand the text to say this, how shall we escape if we neglect anything that our wonderful Savior provided for the redeemed? It then puts us on our toes. We can't sit back and say idly, well, I was saved, and relax in apathy and indifference and callousness and say, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

I'm saved. I'm satisfied. Let the eager go on and press to other levels and other heights.

But as far as I'm concerned, all I want from Christ is salvation. I have that. My friend, the use of the word salvation here is not synonymous with justification.

It's not synonymous with forgiveness, but it includes everything that God purposed the redeemed to have. And therefore, and as long as you live in the flesh, as long as you're in this pilgrim way, there is some aspect of salvation. Some aspect of salvation in the way God uses the term that is yet yours to pursue.

And that day shall come when you shall be delivered from this world and translated into his presence. And then salvation shall have entered into a new phase. And then there will come a time when he returns and you will be given a body like unto his body of glory and salvation will then enter into another new phase.

And then there will be that time at the consummation of all things when the glory shall have been gathered perfectly to the sun and salvation shall enter into still yet another and eternal phase. And so how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation that reaches from eternity past to eternity to come. Bearing this in mind, we go back to the words of our Lord.

You understand that he had something to say to us. I quickly give you five verses because I feel that these epitomize the words of the Lord Jesus. You have a paper in your hand that was given to you as you came in.

Would you turn the paper over and on the blank side on the back, make record of these five statements that began to be spoken of by the Lord. I would call them to your attention because I feel that they systematically set forth with before us the scope of this redeeming purpose. The first one that I give you is that with which you are perhaps now too familiar, though I suppose it's impossible for us to be too familiar with any scripture.

Now before we proceed, is there anyone that does not have a paper and would like one? If you could bring one please to those hands that you see raised. And with it, is there any that would like a pencil? They have also been provided for you. So would you see that pencils likewise are distributed? I suggest that on the next occasion when you come, you attach to this paper that you now have some several folded half sheets upon which you can make other notes.

But tonight I think it will be sufficient to use just the back side. And so if you would care to relate verse three of chapter two is the heading, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord? What did the Lord have to say about salvation? This is the matter that shall engage us. The first statement that I give you is that with which you are familiar, perhaps some might say painfully familiar, Matthew 5 20, number one of the five in sequence.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. We've seen that their righteousness did consist in many things and in each of these inadequate. Our Lord was not condemning what they had but declaring that what the Pharisees had of fundamental theology, evangelistic zeal, missionary fervor, premillennial hope and devout life and practice was in itself inadequate.

That what they needed was something that he alone could give. Perhaps I should call to your attention in addition to the articles that I mentioned in last week's Alliance Witness, the one that you will be receiving and the message that was brought some time ago here in reference to the fact that our Lord Jesus coming down from the mountain touched a leper and made him whole indicating that the Pharisees could give you theology, could give you enthusiasm, could give you expectation and could prescribe your life, but they could not give you cleansing. They could not give eternal life.

And so I would submit to you that this is the first thing that Christ said. That righteousness which prepares you for heaven is entirely other. It is supernatural.

It is imparted. The second thing that we found regarding this what that our Lord had to say is found in Luke chapter 13 verses 3 and 5. And on two occasions our Lord speaks saying, except ye repent, you shall all likewise perish. Except ye repent, repeated the second time in the fifth verse, you shall all likewise perish.

Now for you that may not understand our frame of reference that has been built up over a period of some five years of fellowship together in the church, may I give you the definition of repentance with which we work. Repentance is that hearty, entire, and permanent change of mind, will, intention, and purpose from pleasing self to pleasing God. Now perhaps some of you would like to write that down.

I'll give it more slowly if you wish. Repentance is that hearty, entire, and permanent change of mind, will, intention, purpose, and action from pleasing self to pleasing God. Do you see what we mean now? Not simply sorrow, but a sorrow which leads to a change of purpose, a change of intention, change of direction and action that is hearty and entire and permanent.

Not a passing emotional state, but something that is in the realm of the will, that changes the complete direction of the life from pleasing self to pleasing God. Except you repent. This is what our Lord said.

We have associated with this statement. The word of our Lord in Mark 10 to the rich young ruler, sell all that thou hast, give it to the poor, take up thy cross, and come follow me. This is that work, meat for repentance.

This is what our Lord was asking of this one, and it is what he asks of everyone that would come to him. You say is not this salvation by works? Not so at all. It is a change of purpose from pleasing self to pleasing God, and everyone that has truly repented has done this.

For failing to do this, they have failed to repent. We also associate with this Luke 14, 25 to the end of the chapter. That verse that says, except a man hate his father and his mother and his husband and his wife and his brethren and his sisters in his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

His intention is changed from pleasing his family to pleasing his heavenly father, from pleasing his loved ones to pleasing his Lord, from pleasing himself to pleasing his Savior. This is a change of direction, and it is interpreted by the family as hatred of them, but it isn't hatred of them. It's a purpose to please God.

It is also stated, if any man does not take up his cross and come follow me, he cannot be my disciple. And the cross then brings the man with all of his ambitions and plans and selfish intentions to that place where God has consigned them. This is to repent, to cease from pleasing self, with plans and ambitions to pleasing God.

And then it is likewise stated, except you, or if anyone does not forsake all that he has, he cannot be my disciple. This too is included in repentance, the abandonment of the right to possessions as in something that is intrinsically ours, that talent is not ours longer to be used by us, nor are possessions ours to be used by us, nor is time a treasure that we can sell and use the proceeds of it for our own pleasure. But our time and our talent and our treasure all belong to him, and in repentance we purpose that he should have the good of it.

This is thus all associated with except you repent, he shall perish. Then we find a third, number three in this sequence of what the Lord has said as he's spoken on the subject of salvation, is Matthew 18 and verse 3. Except you be converted and become as little children, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. Subsequent to the intention to repent and change one's direction, there comes the events that will

cause one to step from that path of obedience.

But he has said that there would then be a turning again back to the direction of the heart. And the evidence of repentance is that when you do stumble from the clear way of his will, that seeing it, you humble yourself before him and turn back again to his way. Except you be converted.

This is that which comes to every Christian. This has to do with a matter of perseverance. It has to do with the intention to continue, lest we should find ourselves one day to be as that seed which fell upon stony ground that straightway sprang up and when the sun did come upon it withered away.

This thus has to deal with that intention to continue long after others may have fallen by the wayside and withered in the sun. Except you be converted. Whenever there is a turning aside, there's a turning back to the clear way and will of God.

And then we come to that next text that is associated with it. Found in John the sixth chapter and the fifty-third verse. Our Lord had a great company of people following him, all professing to be his disciples.

And yet, having claimed this high honor of being a disciple of the Lord, when they learned from the lips of the Lord how to have eternal life, they decided they didn't want even to live at such a cost and in such a way. What is the text? Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you. Except you eat the flesh of the Son of God and drink his blood, you have no the Son of Man.

And drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. And I will raise him up at the last day.

He is now making it perfectly clear that salvation is not something apart from himself. He said that life comes from a relationship with him that is as vital and as intimate as the relationship that food in its nourishing power has to the human frame and physique. And he also says that somehow one must partake of God, God the Son, in a relationship that is as intimate and as personal as the food that becomes the strength of your strength, the flesh of your flesh, and the bone of your bone.

In other words, dear heart, it's what I said this morning. Repeat it now. Salvation is not in a plan.

It's not in a text. It's not in a decision. It is in a person, a person who has found, has been received into the very innermost part of one's being.

This is what Christ had to say about eternal life. This is that which first began to be spoken of by the Son. And then I give you a last text in this sequence, John 3, 3 and 3, 7. And particularly for the sake of euphony, call your attention to that third verse, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

It is not only a partaking of Christ, but this partaking of Christ is by the sovereign operation of the Holy Ghost. It is that the Spirit of God overshadows the life of the sinner and does certain things in that sinner's life that brings him to be a partaker of divine life. Now, with this text we come to the, you can turn, reverse your paper if you will, and you've noticed A. If you would be so kind as to write on A that which we found in the last text.

Born of the Spirit. Born of the Spirit. We've heard the Lord Jesus say, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Ye marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. This is the word of the Son that was spoken and that we must now understand.

It is one thing to say that we ought to be born of the Spirit, but is this just an act where the Spirit arbitrarily and sovereignly works apart from any means whatsoever? I believe that it would be appropriate for you to turn your paper back again and list three things that you can do in the matter of seeing people born of the Spirit. Three ministries. Three ministries in which you can participate, or three things that you can do in seeing others brought to Christ.

First, you can live Christ before the sinner as a sample of his grace. You can live Christ before the sinner as a sample of God's grace. And I believe with all my heart that this is the usual way in which people are brought to a knowledge of Christ.

God puts beside that one that is dead in his sins someone that is alive in Christ and uses this one as a sample of his grace. And that person in daily contact is made to see that there is a difference. May I ask you, are you living as a sample of God's grace in the situation where you are day by day? The second thing that you can do for sinners is to intercede for them.

I shan't dwell on this at great length now, for we shall come to it again, but just sufficient to make this simple statement. To intercede is to legally represent the sinner before God. To go into the presence of God in behalf of the sinner and to plead with God as though you were the sinner.

This is to be the advocate for the sinner that God has made you. We remember studying at great length some time ago, early in our study of Revelation, who has made us to be kings and priests unto God. The third thing that you can do for sinners is to witness to them.

To witness to them. That is to take out of the book those truths which are appropriate to the spiritual state of the one to whom God has sent you as a witness. But we shall now turn back again to the other side, because I want you to see the first of these operations of the Holy Ghost, number one under A. The first operation of the Spirit of God in the one whom he would bring to birth in Christ is that which I call awakening.

The awakening of the sinner. The Holy Ghost brings this one to that state we call awakened. The verse that I would associate with it and do in my mind is found in Romans 8 and verse 15.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. One of the ministries of the Holy Ghost is to awaken sinners to their bondage and thus to create in their hearts genuine fear. There is a good and wholesome ministry of fear.

I suppose that you are not the least interested in cancer research or cancer studies or cancer hospitals or cancer surgery. You are not the least interested in it until the doctor says it looks like. And then all of a sudden fear grips you and other things that you would have said, I am too busy to read about the cancer hospitals.

No, because you are afraid, you are all concerned and ought to be. And so it is that people are not the least interested in heaven. They are not the least interested in the gospel.

They are not the least interested in the church until somehow, somehow the spirit of God puts a sword deep into their heart and cuts an incision that touches the quick of their conscience and they are afraid. There is a good ministry of fear. And I submit to you that we must recognize that this is one of the gracious works of the Holy Ghost, the spirit of bondage or the spirit revealing the bondage of the sinner and bringing him to a proper fear.

After all, we will not get far beyond that text that is so patently clear throughout the word. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the beginning of wisdom. Why? Because there is created within the conscience a sense of jeopardy and an awareness of need.

The fear of the Lord. But I say, what is the fear of the Lord? It is to hate evil or to see the entangling and meshing, slaying result of evil and to hate it because of what it has done. This is the ministry of the Holy Ghost.

Now some three, two years ago, I was led of the spirit of God during this very period in which we now are. And I have found that this period from May and June and July is one that is, is a rich period. It seems as though God has led us into deep waters of truth in these times.

And so I'm not surprised that the Lord is taking us this way at this particular occasion. But you may recall that we brought a series of twelve messages, I believe, on text designed to awaken sinners. We brought from the book of Revelation right on through the word of God and from the Old Testament those statements of truth, which when properly understood will have the effect of being used by the spirit of God to stir the conscience and to awaken the sinner.

I trust that you have remembered those texts. I trust you have memorized those texts. I fear you haven't.

And so for that reason, I shall in the early Sunday evening give them to you again and will ask you to please memorize them. And some Sunday evening when you come, we shall have a test and I shall give you a blank paper, ask you to write it and hand it in and if you have the courage to sign your name to it. And that way we will test whether or not we, you are meaning business about this and are actually equipping yourself with the word for the work to which God is calling you.

But there are scriptures that you ought to know which are designed of the spirit of God to awaken sinners. Now do you have them as polished arrows in the quiver of your memory? When you meet someone, you ask yourself, what state is this person? And in conversation you discover that he has the slightest interest in God, the slightest interest in heaven, and utterly unawakened. And you say, well I can't tell him the gospel.

After all, I believe on the Lord Jesus. He doesn't know, believe Lord or Jesus or heaven or life or anything. What do I say to him? And so you just pass the opportunity and hand him a greasy track and say, well maybe I'll pray for him sometime.

Oh no, this isn't enough. This isn't the way it ought to be. If you have an opportunity to converse with him, you ought to have a scripture verse that you have honed in on your knees and sharpened with thought and then have oiled with prayer and have polished with tears.

So that when you have the opportunity and with this unawakened person you can speak his word, believing that it is a dart to penetrate, a sword to sever, that you have something that the Spirit of God can use. You ought to prepare yourself. You see, we're to be prepared unto every good word and work.

Why do you think that we brought those 11 messages? Just to have something to fill up the time on Sunday night? It was to give you the truth and the setting of the truth so that you'd memorize the text. And if there was a question asked, there'd be certain impressions that you would gain so that you could explain the text and thus enforce its effect upon the heart. But we understand this.

For instance, let me illustrate how it was used. Victor Ernest was a friend of mine from Minnesota. He was a pastor that followed me in the First Baptist Church of Little Falls, Minnesota some years afterwards.

But he was older and was in Bible school than when I was in high school. He told me one night his testimony. He said that he was a boy living up in, I believe, Ely, Minnesota, a godless young fellow in a very warm, devout Christian home.

He'd gone out one Sunday afternoon and had the misfortune of running out of money. And the only way he could get it was to get to his mother, and the only place he could get to his mother was church. And so he had to come, and he didn't want to miss her, because he knew she had plans and was going somewhere after the service.

And so the only way to be sure to get her was to come before the church was quite over. But he wouldn't go in, so he sat on the steps. It was a warm night, and the door was open.

Whether the pastor saw him or not, I've never found out. But during the course of the message, the pastor used this text, He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Well, whatever it was, that word came to him like a penetrating knife.

It went right through his sophistication, his callousness, all of his agnostic arguments, and it got right down where Victor Ernest lived. Well, he tried to shake it off. Somehow or other, he was so disturbed by it that he didn't wait to get the money from his mother, but he went home.

He didn't want to get involved with it. And all the week, he got surly and mean and nastier than normal for a sinner. And he just was utterly distressed, because every time he shut his eyes, he saw it.

Every time he listened, he heard it. Every time he thought, it came back again. It was ringing in his ears.

He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, shall suddenly be destroyed, shall suddenly be destroyed, shall suddenly be destroyed. Day and night, suddenly be destroyed, suddenly be destroyed. Until finally, by the next Friday, he was in a terrible state, aware of his sin, aware of his guilt.

Now, there'd been much teaching, much Sunday school, much Christian influence through his home. And the next Sunday, he couldn't wait for the service to make a public testimony of his guilt and his vileness and his iniquity and of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And he was awakened by this text.

And it seems to me highly appropriate that you should understand that the Spirit of God uses this word. Someone said to me, well, what shall I do with a person that doesn't believe the Bible? Well, the question isn't whether the person believes the Bible or not. I mean, you may not believe in cocklebirds, just walk through a patch of them.

They believe in you. They'll stick to you. You don't have to believe in them.

They believe in you. And you don't have, the person doesn't have to believe in the word of God. You just walk through it and watch the way it penetrates and cuts.

And you should believe in it to the point where you're prepared to put it in as the sword of the Spirit and trust the Holy Ghost to use it. Do you know these scriptures? You ought to know them. Now, these things follow in sequence.

Before anything else can happen, the person has to be awakened. I have said repeatedly that you are frequently guilty of praying, oh God, save, save Bill, save Mary, father, mother, husband, wife. And God wants to save them.

But because we're not aware of the steps of the divine operation, our praying is so general. We have to pray, I believe, first God, slay. And this is the work of the Spirit in awakening.

Slaying, preparing the person for death and bringing him to awareness of his guilt. Now, number two. Awakening by the Spirit.

Number two is conviction by the Spirit. Our Lord Jesus, speaking to his disciples concerning that which was to take place, said that when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. The verse I refer to is John 16, verses 8, 9, 10, and 11.

When he, the Spirit of truth, is come or the comforter is come, he will reprove the world, he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. I have mentioned to you in the past of my experience in Africa in another eons ago, it seems so long now, actually 16 years ago when first we went to the field. But when I got there as a young fellow out of school, I did there pretty well as I had done here, following much the same technique and procedures, going into a tribe of people in either my own broken, stumbling way or with the help of an interpreter, probably just as broken and stumbling, but we did get through.

I would talk to them about sin. Had they sinned? Oh, yes. And I was amazed how much they knew.

And were they going to be punished? Oh, yes. The God that made heaven was angry with them. Well, now I had two facts.

They knew that they were punishable and that they had sinned. What would I do about it? Well, then I said, I've come with good news. This God who made heaven sent his son, and his son died for you and was buried and rose from the dead.

And would you like to go to heaven? Their faces would light up. Oh, yes, we want to go to heaven. Well, all right, will you accept him? Surely we'll accept him.

And so I'd have them raise their hands and then I would talk with them and pray with them. And I was so happy, went right home, wrote my prayer letter, you know, got it off on the first mail. I had sense enough, at least, to know that I better get it reported pretty soon, because it might not be too real.

And so I wanted to be as honest as long as I could. So I got the mail on the first post boat and sent out and then left the people. But the only trouble was that when I went back a little later, I found they were still going to the witch doctor and still going to the demon dance and still going to the places of sin, still as iniquitous as they'd been.

The only difference was they said, calling me by name, we're one of his followers, we're one of his people. Well, they were my converts, all right, like the time that Dr. McQuilkin was walking to the hotel where he had his Bible class and he saw a fellow sitting with a head about two yards wide, he'd been drunk all night, and he was on the curb. And this man looked up and through the blariness of his intoxication, oh, he said, Dr. McQuilkin, I'm glad to see you.

You know, I'm one of your converts. And Dr. McQuilkin said, yes, sir, and I'll own you. And you represent the best that I can do.

But I want you to know one thing, dear friend, God never saved you. You never been born of him. Well, that's the way it was with these.

And I had sense enough to know that there was something. You know where the error was, my error? It was this. I had confused recollection of sin, which is a natural function, with the supernatural work of the Holy Ghost, which is conviction of sin.

Do you know the difference? What is conviction? Conviction is that work that God does in the conscience and in the mind, causing the person to stand convicted in his own eyes. We know he's convicted before God. We know he's convicted before the tribunal of eternal justice.

We know he's under the sentence of death, but he doesn't. This is why the spirit scripture has made provision with a class of designed to produce conviction. A class of scriptures designed to produce conviction.

Do you know this class? And are you familiar with them? And do you know how to apply them to the consciences of sinners that are awakened to see them brought to conviction? I have a letter that might do well to publish sometime in the bulletin or related to it, a letter written by John Wesley to the young preachers that followed and assisted and shared with him. In this letter, the thesis essentially is, when you begin to preach, let your preaching be 90 percent law and 10 percent grace until law has done its work and gradually increase it until it is 90 percent grace and 10 percent law. But what we do, you see, generally is start out with 100 percent grace, and because of this, we find that the people are utterly unprepared for grace.

You've heard the statement, and I have not succeeded in getting it implemented, but I say it again. I want it understood. Someone misquoted me.

They said, Brother Edith is going to stop the preaching of the gospel. That's not what I said at all. And I mean, this is all being mechanically recorded on tape, so I'm happy about that.

So anybody can check it. But the thing I said is this. If I had my way, as far as radio is concerned, and a lot of the preaching on the streets and in the churches, I would declare as of tonight a moratorium, that is a cessation for a time, of the preaching of how to be saved.

And I would insist that people preach why sinners need to be saved, how holy God is, how just he is, his majesty, his righteousness, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the enormity of the crime of rebellion, until somehow in the revelation of the holiness of God, men should be smitten through now as they have in other days, and cry out, men and brethren, what must we do to be saved? And then I would take that awakened and convicted heart over to a corner and whisper to him the gospel, Christ died for your sins, according to the scripture. But you see, we've gone to people that have no sense of sin. We've said Christ

died for your sins, and they say, well, isn't that nice? Well, how fine of him to think of doing it for me, and after all, I deserve it if anybody does.

And utterly smug and totally complacent and absolutely indifferent, do you know what we have done? We have gospel-hardened a generation of sinners. And so familiarize themselves with the only thing that can ever deliver them, that they say there's nothing to that. It doesn't work.

And so there is this work of the Spirit of God in awakening but convicting. How is conviction produced? How are guilty culprits before the law convicted? It is that the evidence is produced that they've broken the law. Witnesses are brought.

Testimony is given. A jury considers and a judge pronounces sentence. What is the work of the Spirit of God? God, the one eternal, creditable witness.

When the law is brought up against the conscience of a man, God, the Holy Ghost, comes in and says, this you did, and this you did, and this you have done, and this you have done. And the Spirit of God now becomes the prosecuting attorney. He becomes the celestial witness.

He becomes the interpreter of the text. And when a person gets under the ministry of the Holy Ghost, he is stripped, he is broken, he is crushed, he is convicted of his sin. He is slain in his own eyes.

Do you know why we're seeing so few people saved in the twentieth century? Genuinely saved because we're seeing so few people convicted. And do you know why we're seeing so few people convicted? Because we have seen, we see so little preaching of the holiness of God and the majesty of God and the law of God that's designed to bring conviction. What does the Scripture say about the law? It says, by the law is the knowledge of sin.

By the law is the knowledge of sin. What does that mean? By the law the sinner discovers that his conduct was treasonous, was rebellion, was anarchy, was that of such a nature that it should be judged by death. What does the Scripture say about the law? Now what thing soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

What's the purpose of the law? To stop the mouths, to strip away the sham, take away the pretense, unbear the heart, and prepare men. Now everyone in this congregation ought to so know how to use the Scripture that produces conviction, that you can cooperate with and labor together intelligently with the Holy Ghost, and in love use that word that is designed of the Spirit of God to bring conviction, conviction of sin. Now because I have dealt on it with great length I can quickly pass to it number three, awakening conviction, and the third is repentance.

Except you repent you'll perish. We've already defined it as a change of intention and purpose and will and action from pleasing self to pleasing God. But how can anyone ever change his mind about his crime until he's been convicted of his crime? And therefore it happens in sequence.

Now all of these things may take five minutes. The Holy Ghost in his sovereign grace can compress them to an instant. They have to happen.

It may take five years. I would suggest that if you'd like to acquaint yourself with the with the detailed procedures of divine operation that you read John Bunyan's testimony entitled, A Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, and let the Holy Ghost bring this to your heart. And so conviction issues in repentance.

Now may I submit to you until there is a change of will and intention from pleasing God, from pleasing self to pleasing God, there cannot be number four, which is saving faith. Saving faith. Just as it is the Spirit of God that quickens repentance.

And oh may I say this in this connection. A question was asked some time ago and I had opportunity to answer it and I answered it this time. What of the person that says, I have searched my heart before God and I have absolutely no repentance.

I know I'm a guilty sinner. I know the enormity of it. But I have absolutely found no way in my heart to change my heart's attitude in regard to it.

And I can't do it. What can I do? Well I suggest that in this connection you read Acts the fifth chapter in the thirty-first verse. For I believe that it carries the answer.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom he slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior for to give. Do you see the two words? For to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Thus when the sinner discovers that he does not have repentance, the thing to do is to go to God with a acknowledgement of the hardness and impenitence of his heart and tell Jesus Christ that he has said that except he repents he perishes and he finds in his heart no inclination to repent and Jesus Christ himself must give it. For he's been exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. I would in this connection ask you and urge you and press upon you to secure at your earliest convenience Moody Colportage number one, which is the reason that Mr. Moody founded the Colportage Association.

Number one, which is entitled All of Grace by Charles Haddon Spurgeon. It'll help you. Repentance.

Repentance. What did Paul say? Someone said to me, brother, you know Paul never preached repentance. All Paul said was believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

Repentance is Jewish. Well I used to say the same thing, you know, as a well-trained parent I said what I was taught to say. Paul, he wanted a cracker, got a cracker, and so I taught and said what I was supposed to say and got approval of the people that were approving.

And then one day I took the text and went to the scripture and I found out that it wasn't the way I'd been taught. That when Paul was on Mars hill he said God commandeth all men everywhere shall repent. And when he took leave of the Ephesian elders he says I was with you night and day from house to house teaching repentance toward God in faith toward our Lord Jesus and in that order.

And when he stood before King Agrippa in Acts 26 he said wherefore oh King Agrippa I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision but I delivered to them of Damascus and Jerusalem the Jews and the Gentiles how that they must repent and turn to God and bring forth works meet for repentance. Repentance precedes saving faith. We are to command men to repent.

Have you noticed that we do not command men to believe, we command them to repent and instruct them to believe. But we've made the mistake of commanding men to believe before they've repented and so they've given an intellectual assent and haven't been savingly united with Christ. We command men to repent God command men all men everywhere to repent but the repentant heart he instructs to believe.

And so saving faith rests on the foundation of heart repentance. You know that song that we've sung so often I know not how this saving faith to me he doth impart or how believing in his word wrought peace within my heart he imparts it. Well let's stop there shall we and let's leave this exhortation of you're here tonight and you do not have the certainty of sins forgiven that it would be derelict of us if we were to let the opportunity pass without entreating you and exalting you to come to Christ to savingly embrace the Son of God and to leave knowing that Christ is in you the hope of glory.

You come we can pray with you talk with you make known the scripture to you and God can deal with your heart. I can't guarantee that if you come to this stand here and we go with me into the altar you'll be saved tonight but I know this that unless you make known your need and begin to do something about it you'll die in your sins and the course of wisdom is for you to come and put yourself on record as being in need and when this is done then we can instruct you and deal with you and talk with you and pray with you and help you. You should at least make known your need as much as to say what must I do to be saved and we can deal with your case personally and your need individually so we're going to stand together and sing in closing that hymn that ought to burn itself into every heart pass me not oh gentle savior hear my humble cry while on others thou art calling do not pass me by

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